

PM: People-centred projects will not be scrapped
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The government will not sacrifice people-centred projects under the Ninth Malaysia Plan even though existing allocations were inadequate, said Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today.
MCPX

He said this was decided at the Mid-Term Review of the 9thMP after considering the global fuel price hike which had direct impact on the cost of projects slated for implementation.

abdullah ahmad badawi pak lah pc 060607 smiles "In reviewing all these, the decision taken was, if there are projects whose allocations had to be slashed or projects had to be postponed, it must be made sure that projects that would provide comfort and ensure the people's well-being were not sacrificed," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

Abdullah said this when replying to a question from Razali Ibrahim (BN-Muar) during question time in Parliament.

Razali had wanted to know measures to be taken by the government in its efforts to improve the people's quality of life.

Abdullah, who is also finance minister, said the government had to revise allocations for certain projects while some had to be deferred because the allocations provided under the 9MP were based on the oil prices then which were far lower than now.

The five-year plan began in 2005. A meeting on the mid-term review was held on Tuesday.

Abdullah said among projects to be given priority were infrastructure and basic amenity projects in urban and rural areas.

He said redevelopment projects in urban areas would be focused in areas with a large populace of urban poor such as squatter areas.

Equal opportunities

The government would ensure the projects would provide congenial living surroundings by offering them affordable low-cost houses which they could either rent or buy at affordable prices.

The prime minister said the cabinet at its March 19 meeting had considered the impacts of the fuel price hike and food supply to be faced by the government.

He said besides the RM4 billion allocated to ensure sufficient food supply for the people, the government had also decided to set up a food stockpile.

"The working paper is ready and will be tabled at the next cabinet meeting," he said.

Abdullah also said the government would strive to reduce income disparities among ethnic groups besides ensuring equal opportunities for all Malaysians.

He said the Unity, Culture, Arts and Heritage Ministry had been entrusted with the task of handling these issues.

The prime minister also said the government had incorporated the plan to redevelop new villages and community development programmes for the poor and in remote areas in Sabah and Sarawak under the 9MP.

"This approach needs additional allocations," he said.

Abdullah also said the government would improve crime-prevention measures, including beefing up the police force, and address race relations and religious issues.

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